

Good afternoon, Senator Handley, Representative Sayers and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

My name is Gregg Atterberry, I am a person in recovery since 1986. My story is not unlike many others yet my present day situation is. I am a college graduate, and I also graduated from the school of hard knocks. My addiction started in college, first as casual drinking, progressing to hard narcotics. After spending time in jail I sought help in Middletown at the Connection House inpatient facility. I stayed there for 6 months, after which I had no place to go, rents were too high and my pay did not support me living alone, nor did I have a wardrobe to get a high paying job. (I had also gained a lot of weight so my old clothes were of no use)

I was fortunate that two NA brothers took me in their underground sober house. You see at the time 1986 sober house did not exist as they are now. We had rules, curfew and mandatory meetings. Had it not been for this kind of structure I am not sure I would have been able to continue my recovery. I needed some guidance, especially after coming from two very structured living conditions, jail, then halfway house. To be out on your own with no structure or guidance can be very frightening and frustrating. We then do what becomes comfortable to us.....we use drugs not to feel the frustration, pain, embarrassment, failure and the list goes on.

I own four sober houses in the Middletown area. It is the most rewarding thing I can do. I take primarily people that are incarcerated; I take the ones that their own families will not take... I take the ones that have no furlough sponsors..... I take the men where their families want them to do better, as long as they don't come home..... I take the men where their wife's are afraid of them.... I take the men whose children don't know them.... **I TAKE THE MEN THAT NO ONE WILL TAKE!** I say this because they feel this, they know they are not wanted, despite the wrong they have done they still FEEL. And this is where the sober house helps people to re-connect. We provide a clean, safe, measurable, nurturing environment. We take urines and breathalyzers, and allow no weapons or threats to be tolerated. We are a ZERO tolerance facility. We also provide a family orientated HOME, where you can feel proud to bring family, friends or children home. I can tell you many, many stories about families that are grateful their loved ones are out, but need that arms distance to re connect, we are doing it.

We buy houses in walking distance to the bus line, and to NA/AA meetings, we are very supportive of our neighborhoods. It is part of our being to make sure our houses are the best or next to the best in the neighborhood.

Making sure that the grass is cut, no garbage in front, no hanging out using bad language and anything else that may hurt our reputation. Yes, there have been incidents that maybe contrary to our beliefs, but they are dealt with swiftly and not without consequences and sometimes eviction. We make sure we know who the elderly people are on the block and assist in snow shoveling and any other chore that may help the elderly. I have two neighbors that will substantiate this but were unable to come do to the uncertainty of time frame of this hearing. They will be sending letters to support or cause.

In closing I would like you to visit us, talk to our neighbors, and you to will become a believer that it works if you work it!

Gregg Atterberry
Clean and Sober, LLC
860-798-483